



***United States Attorney
District of New Jersey***

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May 3, 2010

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**FINAL MEMBER OF JEWELRY STORE “SMASH-AND-GRAB” CREW
SENTENCED TO 70 MONTHS IN PRISON**

TRENTON, N.J. – The 10th and final member of a Newark-based “smash-and-grab” jewelry store robbery ring, which targeted jewelry stores in shopping malls in New Jersey, Pennsylvania, Florida, and Georgia, was sentenced today to 70 months in prison, United States Attorney Paul J. Fishman announced.

Jonathan Alvarado, 23, of Newark, New Jersey, previously pleaded guilty before Chief United States District Judge Garrett E. Brown, Jr. on February 1, 2010, to a count of conspiracy involving the robbery or attempted robbery of four jewelry stores in three different states. Judge Brown also imposed the sentence today in Trenton federal court.

Alvarado participated in the robbery of a Bailey, Banks & Biddle in Garden State Mall in Paramus, New Jersey on July 21, 2003, where he and co-conspirators smashed display cases and took diamonds, rings, and Cartier watches valued at more than \$80,000. He and his co-conspirators also used a similar technique to steal Rolex watches, valued at more than \$215,000, from J.E. Calwell Company at the King of Prussia Court Mall in Upper Merion Township, Pennsylvania on August 3, 2003, and to steal \$315,000 in Rolex watches from Mayors Jewelers in the Mall of Georgia in Buford, Georgia, on March 22, 2004. Additionally, Alvarado and his co-conspirators planned a robbery of Corbo Jewelers in the Rockaway Town Square Mall in Rockaway, New Jersey, on August 3, 2003, which they abandoned after entering the mall. They then drove from New Jersey to commit the Pennsylvania robbery.

Alvarado was scheduled to testify as a cooperating witness at the 2008 trial of two of his co-conspirators, William Valentin and Hector Perez. On the date of his scheduled testimony, October 8, 2008, Alvarado absconded. He was consequently charged with the robberies and remained a fugitive until he was arrested in Newark on April 17, 2009. He has been held without bail since that date.

The larger conspiracy involving Alvarado’s nine co-conspirators targeted at least eight stores. The additional stores included: Sherman & Sons Jewelers at the Bridgewater Commons Mall in Bridgewater, New Jersey, on September 28, 2003; Mayors Jewelers at the Seminole Towne Center Mall in Sanford, Florida, on January 8, 2004; Mayors Jewelers at the Town Center Mall in Boca Raton, Florida, on April 19, 2005; and Ultra Diamond Outlet in Jackson Township, New Jersey, on June 24, 2005.

All nine of Alvarado's co-conspirators have pleaded guilty to charges related to the conspiracy and been sentenced by Judge Brown. Alvarado was previously convicted of the jewelry store robbery in Boca Raton, Florida, and served 38 months in federal prison as a result.

In addition to the prison term imposed today, Judge Brown also sentenced Alvarado to three years of supervised release and ordered him to pay \$659,830 in restitution to the jewelry stores he victimized in 2003 and 2004.

In determining an actual sentence, Judge Brown consulted the advisory United States Sentencing Guidelines, which provide appropriate sentencing ranges that take into account the severity and characteristics of the offense, the defendant's criminal history, if any, and other factors. Parole has been abolished in the federal system. Defendants who are given custodial terms must serve nearly all that time.

U.S. Attorney Fishman credited Special Agents of the Federal Bureau of Investigation, under the direction of Special Agent In Charge Michael B. Ward in Newark, for the investigation leading to today's sentence.

The case was prosecuted by Assistant United States Attorney Scott B. McBride of the U.S. Attorney's Office Criminal Division in Newark.

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Defense counsel: Ruth M. Liebesman, Fort Lee, New Jersey